

Explanatory Statement

**Special Needs Text Change
Proposed Text Change to Amend
§4-5, §5, & §32-26**

Purpose/Benefits

To help address the growing need for special needs housing and diverse housing options, we are proposing to amend:

- §4-5 by adding language to exempt (new) §32-26 from the Maximum Allowable Multi-Family Dwellings,
- §5 by adding a new definition for Special Needs Individuals, and
- §32 by adding a new section and standards for Special Needs Housing.

With the implementation of this text change, applicants will have an opportunity to adaptively reuse/redevelop a building to allow housing for Special Needs Individuals.

The changes also serve to address several goals and strategies highlighted in the Westport Plan of Conservation and Development, including:

1. 10.1 Overview (“Westport’s wide variety of housing types from modest homes and historic structures to grand manor homes is one of its strongest features.”), p. 79.
2. 10.4. Monitor Changing Housing Needs, p.85
 - Seek ways to address changing housing needs while maintaining the character and integrity of Westport.
 - Consider ways of integrating affordable and workforce housing in future projects.
 - Support and encourage non-profit organizations that help address housing needs in ways that maintain the character and integrity of Westport.
3. 10.5. Continue to Address Housing Needs, p. 88
 - Continue to address housing needs in Westport (affordable, aged, special needs, ADA).
 - Seek to address affordable housing in ways that are appropriate for the community rather than dictated by private developers.

Summary of Proposed Text Changes

§4-5 Maximum Allowable Multi-Family Dwellings

To encourage and enable Special Needs Housing, the proposed section (§32-27) is added to the exemption eligibility listed in §4-5-2. This would permit such housing, all of which is required to be Below Market Rate (as defined in pending regulation changes).

§5 DEFINITIONS

To enable regulations serving those with special needs, a definition is created to outline the parameters of a special needs individual pursuant to Sections 1-1f and/or 1-1g of the Connecticut General Statutes.

§32-27 Special Needs Housing

§32-27.1

Outline the purpose and permitted locations for such housing, which is limited to land along state roads served by public sewer and water and either zoned nonresidential or on residential properties with existing nonconforming uses and/or density. This will appropriately limit the applicability of the regulation.

§32-27.2

The proposed density of 800sf/unit is the same standards found in the §32-14 “Conversion of School Buildings to Housing”. Additionally, density will be limited to 6 units in any one building.

§32-27.3 ~ §32-27.8

Setback, Height, Coverage, Landscaping/Buffer and Parking standards are included to permit some flexibility of design for adaptively reused buildings in order to provide for the ability to meet codes for buildings and handicapped accessibility, which can be particularly critical element for Special Needs Individuals.

As Special Needs Individuals typically do not drive, a parking standard is provided to adequately account for likely staffing and visitor demand.

§32-27.11

All Special Needs Housing is required to be affordable to households whose income does not exceed 80% of the State Median Income.